

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01304 271844Z
ACTION EUR-12

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 1304

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, UR, US, PFOR
SUBJECT: SOVIET REACTION TO ALLEGED CONTAMINATION OF WATER IN
MOSCOW

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. FOLLOWING IS UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF ARTICLE APPEARING
ON PAGE THREE OF JANUARY 25 EDITION OF "IZVESTIYA" UNDER
HEADLINE "A REJOINDER-DIRTY SLANDER AND 'DIRTY TEST TUBES':
(BEGIN TEXT)

RECENTLY, EVER-GROWING COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE "DIFFICULT
LIVING CONDITIONS" IN THE SOVIET CAPITAL HAVE BECOME ONE OF THE
"FASHIONABLE" THEMES OF THE REPORTS OF SEVERAL AMERICAN
CORRESPONDENTS WORKING IN MOSCOW. SOME DON'T LIKE
THE MOSCOW CLIMATE, OTHERS FIND THE MUSCOVITES' WAY OF LIFE
DOESN'T SUIT THEM, AND STILL OTHERS KICK UP A FUSS ABOUT
ALL THINGS MUSCOVIAN SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT AMERICAN.
IT'S TRUE THAT LATER, HAVING RETURNED TO THE U.S., MANY
OF THEM RECALL WITH PLEASURE THE CLEAN MOSCOW AIR, WHICH BY
COMPARISON WITH NEW YORK AND LOS ANGELES SEEMS ALMOST LIKE
PURE COUNTRY AIR. AND THEY RECALL THE PEACEFUL MOSCOW STREETS,
ALONG WHICH ONE MAY SAFELY STROL AT ANY TIME OF DAY OR NIGHT.

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BUT ALL THAT, AS THEY SAY, COMES LATER.

BUT WHILE THEY'RE IN MOSCOW, EVERYTHING BOTHERS THEM.
FOR INSTANCE, THE SYSTEM OF MEDICAL CARE DOESN'T SUIT ONE OF
THEM AND HE SORROWFULLY COMMUNICATED TO HIS FELLOW COUNTRYMEN
THAT AMERICANS, LIVING IN MOSCOW, PRACTICALLY HAVE TO FLY
TO WESTERN EUROPE TO SEE A DOCTOR. WELL, SO WHAT? IF

SOMEBODY LIKES GOING FOR HIS COLD PILLS TO A LONDON, RATHER THAN A MOSCOW, PHARMACY, HE CAN KEEP RIGHT ON DOING SO. IT'S A MATTER OF TASTE. BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT PILLS OF A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT CONTENT - ABOUT THE SLANDEROUS COMMUNIQUE OF SOME ANGRY AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS WHO INSULT THE HONOR AND DIGNITY OF MOSCOW.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN RECENT DAYS SOME NEWSPAPERS OVER HERE HAVE PRINTED A "SENSATIONAL" DESPATCH FROM AN UNNAMED CORRESPONDENT OF ONE OF THE NEWS AGENCIES WHO BASED HIS REPORT DIRECTLY ON OFFICIALS OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. THIS REPORT CATEGORICALLY STATED THAT IN TWO MOSCOW BUILDINGS WHERE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS LIVE IT WAS SUPPOSEDLY DISCOVERED THAT THE WATER CONTAINS DANGEROUS AMOUNTS OF CYANIDE AND MERCURY. AS PART OF THIS, REFERENCE WAS MADE TO SPECIAL TESTS OF MOSCOW'S WATER CONDUCTED BY AMERICAN SPECIALISTS.

BUT SOON THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR OF THIS DIRTY STORY WAS LED TO CLEAN WATERS. THREE DAYS AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF HIS FALSIFICATIONS, THERE FOLLOWED AN EXPLANATION FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGENCY OF THE U.S. OFFICIALLY STATED THAT REPORTS ABOUT "POLLUTED MOSCOW WATER" WERE UNTRUE. A SECOND ROUND OF TESTS MADE BY AMERICAN SPECIALISTS SHOWED A TOTAL ABSENCE OF MERCURY, CYANIDE OR FOR THAT MATTER ANY OTHER DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES. ACCORDING TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT, THE ".MISTAKE" CONSISTED OF THE FACT THAT DURING THE FIRST TEST IT TURNED OUT THAT NOT THE WATER BUT RATHER THE BOTTLES AND TEST TUBES WERE CONTAMINATED.

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FOR OUR OWN PART, WE MIGHT ADD THAT THE SOURCE FROM WHICH THIS ANONYMOUS AMERICAN RESIDING IN MOSCOW DREW HIS INFORMATION IS THE ONE CONTAMINATED - AND IT WOULD SEEM RATHER FUNDAMENTALLY SO. YU. BARSUKOV, CORRESPONDENT OF "IZVESTIYA" WASHINGTON (END TEXT)

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2. CONTRARY TO ALLEGATION IN "IZVESTIYA" PIECE, SOURCE OF WIRE SERVICE INFORMATION WAS NOT BRIEFING BY EMBOFFS BUT RATHER ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM CIRCULATED TO EMBASSY STAFF.
TOON

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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